

The Second Annual Woodworking Equipment and Wood Processing Public Policy Fly-In

February 9 - 11, 2009



AWFS will once again join WMMA and WMIA in Washington, DC for the Second Annual Woodworking Equipment and Wood Processing Public Policy Fly-In. AWFS continues its role as an active participant in the Washington, D.C. legislative process by becoming involved in the annual trek to DC to have meetings with Congressional representatives and their staffs. The year 2009 ushers in a new administration and Congress which will address important issues affecting every manufacturer and small- and medium-sized business.

AWFS Public Policy Committee Members will meet with their state's representatives and advocate for the industry as well as their individual company's concerns. The Fly-In is scheduled for February 9 - 11, 2009 in Washington, D.C.

Some of the issues targeted as industry concerns include:

- Estate tax repeal or reform
 - In 2011, the "death tax" returns to the 55 percent rate with a \$1 million exemption.
- OSHA dust regulations
 - The adoption of NFPA Standard 654 is interpreting wood dust as an explosive dust and the cost of conformance to the regulation may close many wood product manufacturers.
- Statute of repose
 - A historical WMMA issue
- Health care
- Card check legislation
 - Union organizing
- Direct expensing/depreciation bonus
 - As a stimulus package
- Paid leave
 - Under the Family and Medical Leave Act, this may levy an additional payroll tax.
- Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) funding
 - Should federal funding be a performance based grant?

Each committee member, while meeting with their congressional representatives, can choose to prioritize the issues above as to what is most important to their state, the industry as a whole and finally, their companies. In many cases, it is more advantageous to pick three or four issues to push since time is somewhat limited in these meetings.

The annual Fly-In is something that AWFS does as a public policy process. AWFS has had its Board of Directors meet in DC and participate in the Fly-In in some years as well as the Public Policy Committee. Ours has been a coordinated event, first with NAM and then with WMMA, however, anyone can call and make an appointment to see your congressional representative if you have concerns and want to have a face-to-face. They are your representatives and they are there to serve you. With a new administration, 2009 is a perfect time to make your industry/economic concerns heard.